THE
NATION

OCTOBER 24, 1959 . . 25c

The Quiz-Whiz Fraud

HAIL, BLITHE SPIRIT!

Dalton Trumbo

The Macmillan Victory

R. T. McKenzie

Dilemma of Soviet Trade

Harold J. Berman

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LETTERS

Daring the H-Bomb

Dear Sirs: A great deal of concern has been expressed over the French proposal to test an atomic bomb in the Sahara Desert. [See "Poisoning the Sahara," by Ira Morris, *The Nation*, Sept. 5.] The loudest protests so far have come from the people of Nigeria and Ghana. For the prevailing wind from the desert, which blows continuously for two months during the dry season, may carry radioactive particles of sand over their countries.

The British Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War is planning to make a dramatic protest by sending an international group into the test area in the Sahara. This group, by running the risk of imprisonment, injury or death, hopes to remind the world of the extreme danger and folly of testing nuclear weapons, and of allowing ownership of such armaments to spread to yet another country. The committee (it is unaffiliated with any political party) organized the London-Aldermaston March and the non-violent resistance at the Swaffham rocket site. Its policy is unilateral nuclear disarmament by each power now possessing nuclear weapons.

The protest team will assemble in Ghana and, announcing in advance their intentions to the French Government, travel by automobile from Ghana to the Reggan area of the Sahara, where the first French atom bomb is shortly to be tested. If they manage to reach their destination, they will try to dissuade the scientific and military personnel on the spot from carrying out the test. If unsuccessful, they will remain in the area themselves when the test is made.

We appeal to all those in sympathy with this project to make a donation toward the extremely heavy costs that will be incurred. Contributions should be sent to The Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War, 344 Seven Sisters Rd., London N.4, England.

EARL RUSSELL, LORD BOYD ORR,
PAT ARROWSMITH, APRIL CARTER,
DONALD SOPER, ALEX COMFORT

London

The West's Fault

Dear Sirs: Regarding Frederick Kuh's article, "East Germany Is No Mirage," in your October 10 issue, no reference is made to the very powerful forces of subversion used by the West to weaken the East German regime. It was this factor which caused the "blockade" of 1949 and has caused the present Berlin situation — not to mention the June, 1953, riots.

It also explains, in large part, the failure to "ease political repression" which is so lamented by Mr. Kuh.

MAX BERB

Bethayres, Pa.

Is it also the West's fault that East Germans are still fleeing to the Federal Republic at the rate of 3,000 weekly? — THE EDITORS

Swallowing the Rat

Dear Sirs: Regarding your September 13 editorial, "Then and Now," concerning recent motion pictures which recall the Nazis "as a bunch of great chaps who played on the other team," I think you might be guilty — if I may borrow one of Khrushchev's latest expressions — of not being able to swallow or spit out a dead rat which has caught in your throat.

None of us needs to be reminded that the Nazis were desperate and obscene men with diseased minds. But it must also be granted that not every German soldier was a thoroughly indoctrinated, cold-blooded fanatic. The German heroes of both *The Young Lions* and *The Enemy Below* were . . . fictional examples of a minority group of militants who may have been deeply wrenched by internecine forces — the oppressing duty of the soldier and the basic belief in the dignity of the single human being. I believe that any intelligent person will readily concede that such men existed in the German army. . . .

FRANK H. CROWTHER
Associated Editor, Daily Tar Heel
U. of North Carolina

Chapel Hill, N.C.

There is, unfortunately, a generation now growing up who will never know that the Nazis were "desperate and obscene men with diseased minds" if it has to rely on Hollywood's current treatment of World War II. — THE EDITORS.

Man-Eating Bears

Dear Sirs: I wonder how long Professor Wade Thompson ["My Campaign Against Fraternities," Sept. 26] can hold on at Brown? Every generation or two, Brown finds itself plagued with at least one humanistic scholar: E. Benjamin Andrews, Percy Marks, and now Wade Thompson. Sixty-three years ago my father suffered with E. Benjamin Andrews, who spoke out too honestly for Bryan and humanity. Thirty-three years ago I was not allowed to meet Percy Marks, who had just spoken out too honestly for *The Plastic Age*. And now, Wade Thompson. Has he spoken out too honestly concerning the chief industry of Athol, Massachusetts?

Would that every Brunonian of the class of 1963 could read and ponder this September 26 issue of *The Nation* which I did not have the wit to read and ponder thirty-three years ago! With humor and insight Professor Thompson has helped me to relive some of the most intense months of my youth.

MORRIS SHARP

Chicago, Ill.

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THE NATION

EDITORIALS

Pre-Summit Contretemps

If one freezes one's toes, the pain begins when a bit of warmth reaches the frozen capillaries, and grows worse as the circulation improves. Something analogous is happening in the cold-war-thaw project on which Messrs Eisenhower and Khrushchev have established a gingerly collaborative relationship. The heads of government can sit and talk, but their vast complexes of allies, military machines, Machiavellian diplomacy, vested interests and ambitions, and apparatus for persuasion of the multitudes — all these respond only sluggishly to the new demands. And this is true of both the Eastern and Western blocs. Mr. Khrushchev scheduled his talks in Peking immediately after his conversations at Camp David with the obvious intent of placating his powerful and bullheaded Chinese ally. His success was not conspicuous. While exhorting the glowering Chinese to abandon thoughts of downing capitalism by force, he could not refrain from the orthodox Marxist reservations concerning "liberating, just" wars which, of course, in Red Chinese eyes precisely fit Formosa, the Pescadores, Quemoy and Matsu. At the same time, not by accident, *our* bullheaded Chinese ally sounds off loudly about the impending counter-revolution in China and his victorious return to the mainland. On the other side of the world, in the midst of preparations for serious disarmament discussions, Washington announces that an American IRBM base is to be established in Turkey.

Further depressing examples could be adduced, but it is not quite true, as Ray Tucker says, that "almost every international development since the Eisenhower-Khrushchev meeting seems designed deliberately to embitter Russo-American relations and to prevent a summit meeting for relieving tensions and preventing wars." The Turkish IRBM base, for instance, has been in the planning-negotiation stage for at least a year and could not have been jettisoned at the last minute. Even the State Department publicists, not renowned for their sensitivity, treated the announcement as a hot potato. A planned base shoots no missiles; this one may never be built. The most serious contretemps is the one in China. Chiang still has a third of his forces garrisoned on Quemoy and Matsu. Under Secretary of State Douglas Dillon says there will be total war if the Chinese Communists "attempt to seize Taiwan and the offshore islands." The Chinese Reds cannot seize Taiwan, but they may try to seize Quemoy and Matsu. It would be a signal contribution to the liquidation of the cold war to turn these miserable islands over to their rightful owner, i.e., whichever power happens to be in possession of the mainland. Deeds, as well as words, are required not only of the Soviets but of us, and this is one sensible action which could be taken now, while the shooting is in abeyance, but which will become psychologically impossible if the Reds should mount a serious attack.

Testing the Thaw

While the foreign situation is so fluid, for domestic politicians it is a time of watching and waiting. The potency of foreign policy in deciding elections is shown by the victory of the British Tories: One factor undoubtedly was that Macmillan, because of his role in bringing about the conversations between Eisenhower and Khrushchev, was thought best qualified to represent Britain at a Summit. The American electorate may be similarly influenced. If the cold war is renewed, no candidate will have a chance unless he breathes defiance and promises to be tough with the Russians. But if the international climate continues to improve, the voters will look for a President who believes that East-West differences can be settled by negotiation.

Less decisively, but in a degree not to be ignored, these criteria will influence the voting for Congressmen. The O'Konskis and the Scherers have no choice: they can breathe only in an atmosphere of international smog. But most Congressional candidates are not irrevocably committed. If Meyer of Vermont and Byron Johnson of Colorado can be re-elected, the run-of-the-mill Congressional candidate will gladly assume a more or less similar position.

At high levels the uncertainty is even more painful. A prime example of the politician earning his living the hard way is the Vice President. Mr. Nixon is clearly inclined to go along with the let's-be-tough-with-Russia, don't-believe-Khrushchev, we-must-keep-up-our-guards sloganeers. In about two speeches out of three, he uses

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their concepts. It is perfectly clear that a foreign-policy breach is developing, if it has not already developed, between the President and Mr. Nixon. Yet, so powerful is the popular yearning for peace, not at any price but as an objective consistent with patriotism and national integrity, that in his third speech Mr. Nixon graciously approves of the President's invitation to Mr. Khrushchev and even takes a little of the credit for whatever has been achieved. Then, after some prudent hedging along these lines, he reverts to wooing the fire-and-brimstone vote. Yet even this ratio reflects the strength, in terms of practical domestic politics, of the peace movement. In the United States it shows itself in innumerable ways — the Democrats appoint a predominantly liberal science-policy commission, a professor in Georgia asks the commission to work out the economics of disarmament, a professor at Yale proposes an across-the-board budget arms cut, businessmen wonder out loud what would take the place of the armament industry if peace should break out. The wind shifts, but it blows predominantly in this direction, and the politicians, high and low, seem to sense it.

The Public and the AEC

In the wake of Grace DesChamps' *Nation* article on the dumping of "hot" atomic wastes in waters near Boston (September 19 issue), the Atomic Energy Commission has held "informational" meetings at Boston and on Cape Cod. At the Cape Cod briefing, two experts offered assurances that neither the inshore nor offshore dumpings presents a danger of contamination. But the Cape Cod selectmen, as their questions indicated, were not fully reassured. If the "hot" wastes were harmless, why were they placed in steel drums? If one of the drums collapsed in the hearing room, would there be a hazard? ("I won't say it wouldn't be a potential hazard," one of the experts responded, "but I'm not saying, either, that it would be a real hazard.") Did the Interstate Commerce Commission control govern transportation of "hot" wastes to storage places and disposal areas? (The AEC could and did obtain "exemptions" from these regulations.)

When the selectmen asked what assurance could be given that there would be "a formal, public hearing" before another license for the disposal of waste materials was issued, they were told that this would be a question for the AEC to decide. (Meantime, on another front of the atomic-dump problem, the AEC has set either December 1 or December 8 for hearings on whether New Britain, Conn., will have to harbor an atomic-waste storage site; see "Test Case on Atomic Waste," by Gerald McCourt, *The Nation,* August 1.)

Local communities are surely entitled to more information that was provided at this session. As Philip Siekevitz has pointed out (*The Nation,* September 26), most of the official pronouncements on radiation coming out of Washington are in the form of just such briefings by men who have been delegated to the job by government. And since all governments have an official policy, the briefings are not always unbiased explanations of the results of scientific experiments. At the Cape Cod hearings, one of the experts was from the staff of the AEC and the other is associated with a scientific organization that derives support from that agency. The assurances these men offered may have been entirely objective and valid, but local communities are entitled to assurances of another character. From the outset, the AEC has been insensitive to the public implications of its policies and programs. Recently, for example, the Coast and Geodetic Survey set a large number of bottles adrift, some of which were found by persons on the beaches at Martha's Vineyard; only *after* local inquiries had been made did the AEC announce that the bottles were related to a study that was being made of atomic-waste disposal. After this data has been gathered and analyzed, the commission will convene a group of marine scientists to evaluate the results.

To the layman, it would seem that a study of this type might more properly have been undertaken *before* the dump sites were selected.

Here We Go Again

There is a phenomenon in psychology known as *déja vu*: the impression that the beholder has been there before, although actually he is in the place for the first time. In the relations between American and German industry and finance the phenomenon recurs, and it has an easy, naturalistic explanation. It is simply that American capitalists have more money than they know what to do with, that they want to invest it profitably, and that German industry, on the whole the most advanced in Europe, exerts a powerful attraction, which becomes downright irresistible after American industry has exerted itself to destroy German industry in a war. It is a kind of lethal lovers' quarrel: they try to kill each other, then they embrace. It happened after the first World War, it is happening again. Appropriately enough, the principal channel is armaments manufacture. "United States armaments manufacturers have begun to pour massive amounts of capital and technical experience into the reviving West German arms industry," writes Arthur J. Olsen in *The New York Times* (October 14). The motive to "get into Germany" is the "widespread conviction that the Bonn Republic is destined to become a major weapons producer." Cited are some mergers and tie-ups: Lockheed Aircraft and Heinkel-Messerschmitt (the latter has been building bicycles and midget cars); General Electric and Bayerische Motorwerke; Bayerische Motorwerke and American Motors; Vertol Aircraft Corporation and Dor-

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nier; United Aircraft and A. G. Weser (controlled by Alfried Krupp); Perkin-Elmer (manufacturer of the Sidewinder missile) and Bodensee Werke-Pekin-Elmer; Continental Motors and Kloeckner-Humbolt-Deutz (Ruhr steel company); Studebaker-Packard and Daimler-Benz; General Dynamics and Hispano-Suiza of Geneva, which manufactures an armored personnel-carrier for the West German Army; and Bell Aircraft and Henschel of Kassel. The resounding Teutonic names ring in American ears; to some they mean profits, but to others they stir memories of the mangled bodies of comrades-in-arms.

When Pranks Turn Lethal

At the University of Southern California, a fraternity pledge choked to death on a quarter-pound piece of oil-soaked liver. At Cornell, during the first ten days of the fall term, six students received medical care for injuries suffered during hazing. At both institutions, public shock and anger have produced counteractions. An undisclosed number of students will be expelled from U.S.C. and the president of the university has issued new regulations which, among other provisions, order that adult advisers be present at all initiations and that pledge activities be submitted to school officials. (The new "code" set off a riot so violent that city police and fire detachments were afraid to enter the campus.) At Cornell, as a first measure, the Interfraternity Council is considering the banning of all "non-constructive" hazing — pledges would be required to do useful household and community jobs.

Such action is welcome, of course, but it comes under the head of belatedly locking the barn door. And on hundreds of other campuses, where this year, at least, no tragedies occurred, hazing goes on as usual. A great many people have been uneasily aware for years that fraternities are often wickedly discriminatory and that some of their traditional practices encourage whatever sadism is latent on the campus. And fraternities, though apparently part of the university life and university plant, are in fact controlled by the national organizations that issue their charters. A local chapter is "foreign soil," like an embassy. Why have not the colleges long since swept these dubious societies from their campuses?

The answer is simple and it is financial. Fraternity houses are, in effect, dormitories that function outside the university budget. More important, alumni are fraternity men, the house is where they hold their alumni feasts, and their loyalty to their Greek letters is at least as great as their love for Alma Mater. Knock off the fraternities and you would knock off a large area of alumni benevolence.

We are reluctant to urge heroism on the other fellow, so we do not call on trustees and administrators to wipe out, overnight, the present national fraternity system. But some colleges operate with only local fraternities and some with no fraternities at all. If the immediate behavior of fraternity chapters is the responsibility of their undergraduate members (and if they can therefore be expelled when pranks turn lethal), the long-term existence of these institutions is the responsibility of the universities themselves. They have enough evidence to show that a hands-off policy is too costly. They must decide how eventually they will abolish or basically modify a system that is now established on shabby values, ambiguous controls and financial embarrassment.

THE QUIZ-WHIZ FRAUD

HAIL, BLITHE SPIRIT! . . *by Dalton Trumbo*

WHO WILL ever be able to forget the days of our glory, before Sputnik I and Lunik II, when culture came to Madison Avenue, and eggheads drew better ratings than murderers? And who cares to estimate how many millions of savage little juveniles, denied their nightly beakers of blood, twisted sullenly while the old man roared his answers at the sweating slob on the TV screen, and mother filled the station breaks with gentle sermons on the cash value of education?

As for the characters who led this national assault on Parnassus—where could one find better proof of the richness, the bigness, the democratic variety of the American intellect? Illiterates and college professors, preachers and union organizers, club ladies and cowhands, actors and show clerks, cab drivers and jockeys, arthritic senior citizens, half-weaned babes, nubile females, pimply students, the dazed, the crazed, the lame, the halt, the grind: came they all to the booth, podium, board or panel, and there worked they their steamy wiles. On July 16, 1956, Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus pulled down the Big Top forever, hopelessly outclassed by the grunting, twitching, stammering, grimacing herd of innocents and odd-

DALTON TRUMBO won many honors as a screenwriter under his own name, and during the McCarthy era won an as yet unrevealed number of Oscars and Oscar nominations under other names.

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balls who prowled the American rumpus room from sea to shining sea.

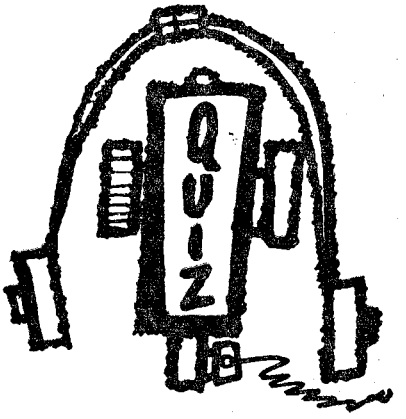
The winners' pictures nested regularly on the front page of the national press. Editorial columns flowered with laudatory essays on the virtues of a country in which treasures of the intellect—or, at least, of memory—stood so high in public esteem, and paid off so handsomely. Sermons were preached. Lecture tours were arranged. Morals were drawn. School teachers looked nervously ahead to a time when conceivably they would be readmitted to the national community. Oceans of lotions, lathers, depilatories and deoderants were sold. In Vegas they were laying eight to five on the renaissance by 1960.

AND THEN they had to go and spoil it. Somebody hired this comedian as a "standby contestant," whatever that is. He stood by until a regularly employed contestant incautiously left her notebook in a dressing room. He filched the book. He read it. His heart stood still. Written there were questions *cum* answers for the next time around. Dear God, the show was fixed! Outraged conscience impelled him to legal threats.

The owners of the spectacle arranged for him to be paid $1,500, for which he signed a statement that the show was clean as a hound's mouth, and promised that he'd not talk to the law about anything. Shortly afterward, conscience nibbling once again, he lapsed. He began talking to all sorts of people until, in the lovely argot of his tribe, he "blew the whistle" on practically everybody. Asked why he hadn't stayed bought, he replied that the show was fraudulent, and he didn't regard the $1,500 as "hush money" any more. On this gamey note, the fat flew into the fan.

By the time the odor spread from Madison Avenue to the district attorney's office and the chambers of the grand jury, the TV industry, as it is called, was in movement: people investigating other people, people writing affidavits, people testifying boldly for free, people testifying shyly under subpoena, people dodging subpoenas, people leaving town, people coaching people, people lying, people being shocked, surprised, infuriated, betrayed, deceived, alarmed —and even indicted. Recusancy turned epidemic among former contestants, some of whom were cruelly trampled in the general rush to reveal how cunningly virtue had been snatched.

A young philosopher, whose testimony may ruin the life and destroy the career of his opponent, won $49,500, which is valid sugar for a philosopher, and then was forced to



"take a dive." Although he had cheated on every rung of the ladder, it was the cheat to lose that troubled him most. He heard his name mentioned in NBC commercials "day after day," with rhetorical speculations whether he would "crack the $100,000 mark."

Gloomily he recalled, "And I was sitting there saying, 'No, he won't; he's going to take a dive tonight.' " As diving time approached he became "very upset"; he urged the producer "to let me play an honest game." But no: dishonest it had been, and dishonest it was to be. "On top of that, when I took my planned nose dive, I was forced to go out on a question about a motion picture which I had seen only three days ago. This can be embarrassing." Dishonestly missing a question he honestly could answer now seemed more reprehensible than dishonestly answering questions he honestly couldn't. It was a stern moment for a philosopher who hadn't yet "cracked the $100,000 mark."

Some time after hitting the canvas, at a speak-bitter luncheon with the producer, he remarked that his successor was doing very well. "Oh no, he's playing it honestly now," said the producer. Honesty and success being natural enemies in the TV jungle, our philosopher hustled out to bet $5,000 at two to one that his former rival would go down next time around. Sure enough! Instead of $49,500, $59,500 now nestled in the poke.

As it always happens, security gave rise to afterthought. He found himself assailed by general nervousness and pangs of guilt. He developed a "strong feeling that I had myself engaged in the fraud for too long." It took ten months in psychiatry, and a good chunk of the swag, to disentangle id from ego from libido. Then he talked.

OTHERS, who had won less than the philosopher, suffered fewer pangs, or none at all. A union organizer got "sick of the business" after collecting $15,000, but not sick enough to turn down the additional $9,500 still owing him and later paid. A restaurant manager, who dragged an impartial $15,200 from two shows —one on CBS and the other on NBC—asked if he thought taking a dive "fraudulent," blandly replied, "I am not convinced of it." A producer earnestly explained that he was "trying to put together an exciting and interesting show and I never did feel there was anything terribly wrong with it."

Some contended they appeared on the show, not as legitimate contestants, but as paid entertainers: "If the truth were known, there wouldn't be any entertainment." A high-spirited housewife, who made off with only $1,460, refused to beat about the moral bush. She admitted her fraudulent performance may have made it difficult for rivals to come up with anything as "spritely." For herself, "I feel perfectly blithe about it. . . . They were having a happy time, I was, everybody was." And—bless her wise little innocent heart!—no one had the slightest reason to disbelieve her.

A producer who lied to the grand jury did so because "I was panicked, I was terrorized, and I did it." In 1957 and 1958, NBC had held a series of meetings with producers and agents of a gyp-show, and thereafter had issued a statement that charges against the show were

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baseless, and the network had complete confidence in its integrity. In this dreary autumn of 1959, a vice president of NBC delivered himself of the bizarre opinion that his corporate master had "no reason to suspect any rigging," adding that he and his rustic colleagues were "very badly deceived." On top of this, a vice president of the sponsoring pharmaceutical company gravely announced that he "was shocked." He hastened to explain that "Our position was such that until such time as we had any facts to back up the newspaper stories, we would sit tight."

A sixteen-year-old schoolgirl, lured by an ad for folk singers, sworn to secrecy even from her family, and Fagined into the mysteries of cheating, found it not so easy to sit tight. When rumors circulated about the show, the child's mother asked for, and received, from her daughter—along with such tears as every parent can imagine—the bitter truth. Later, over a bugged telephone, the producer urged the child to perjure herself if investigated.

Questioned about her reaction to the fraud, the girl said, "I didn't even think about it. . . . The over-all excitement appealed to me. I saw it more as an opportunity to sing than anything else." The plan, she explained, was for her to tie twice with a contestant, and "finally beat him, and the interest would be enough that I could bring my sister on the show."

Said the mother, whose family the producers had violated, "Any parent would be outraged when their child had been deliberately led to be deceptive. . . . But when a youngster is asked to commit perjury or led in that direction, I think it's disgraceful." The girl, now eighteen, asked if she thought her conduct two years ago questionable, said: "Yes—I'm here now trying to help clean it up." Which is much more than the sponsors, the producers, the advertising agencies, and the network executives are doing or intend to do.

And so the sorry tale unfolded. As almost always happens in the climactic passion of Congressional investigation, the real fraud consisted in the exposure of fraud. No Congressman can hope for headlines if he dwells on the carcinoma factor in cigarettes, the worthlessness of snake oil as a cure for senility, the calculated falsity of practically all televised commercials, or the arrogant greed of men who have appropriated the free air and turned it into a witches' bazaar of howling peddlers hawking trash. A sixteen-year-old girl makes safer copy than the president of NBC and has fewer lawyers.

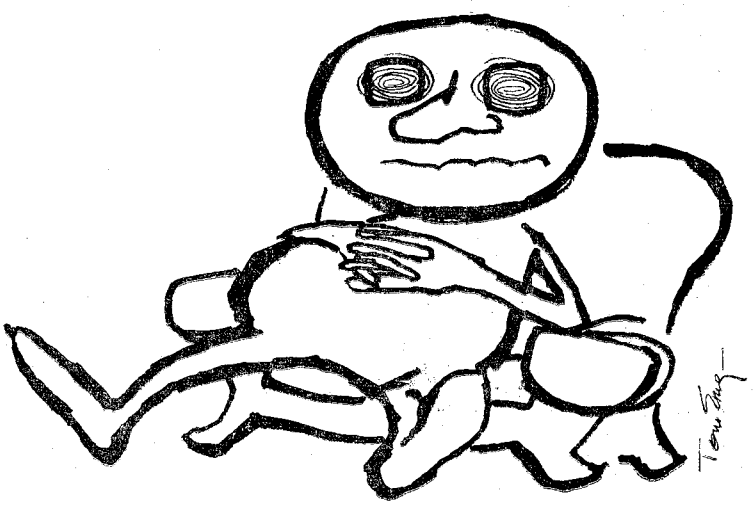
IN ONLY one aspect of the scandal can we take real satisfaction: all who participated in the fraud were certified, loyal Americans. The elaborate system of blacklisting, by which the networks deny use of publicly-owned channels to those with whom they disagree, makes certain of that. Everybody connected with the shows had been cleared by the American Legion, The House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Senate Internal Security Committee, AWARE, ALERT, *Red Channels*, sponsors' check-ups, the agencies' private eyes, the networks' corps of dedicated snoops. And Heaven knows how many private nuts, crooks and crackpots.

The people who dived, and the people who won, and all who arranged the cheat and sponsored it, and distributed it, had never been controversial; they had never publicly dissented from anything; they had never joined a *verboten* organization; they had never given money to unpopular causes. To the last child they were authenticated patriots, well-oathed and clean as the whistle that finally blew them up. Though tens of millions of dollars were earned by sponsors, broadcasters, and producers of the fraudulent shows, though the trust of a nation's children was ravished by them, at least the Republic could take comfort that it hadn't been gulled by a gang of subversives.

Once that crumb has been digested, the rest is nightmare. The eerie landscape of Madison Avenue, perceived through the private agony of gifted men who mirrored and now must atone for its knavery, reveals the future which there has been projected for us — a future boldly rigged for the naked worship of things and self, animated by a materialism so primitive that it is incapable of developing either philosophic basis or moral objective: a future of true godlessness, of pure degeneracy, of corruption absolute.

IT WAS not intended this way. In the early twenties, David Sarnoff prophesied of radio broadcasting: "As the picture will become plainer, there will emerge, in radio, musical foundations, operatic foundations and lecture foundations, endowed or supported by great public-spirited Americans, who will see in this vast instrumentality of the air another means to become benefactors." What did we get? *Twenty-one, Tic Tac Dough, Dotto* and *The $64,000 Question*, not to mention the assorted incitations to murder regularly purveyed in Western and detective dramas, and the general reduction of sex from love to lust.

In 1922, when it was learned that station WEAF, in New York, had sold air time to hawk real estate,



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Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, whose department gave the boys their licenses, said: "I don't believe there is anything the people would take more offense at than the attempt to sell goods over radio broadcasting." (They did not take offense, and neither did Mr. Hoover. Instead, they surrendered their free air, as an absolute monopoly, to a gang of merchandisers whose ethical standards are defined in a single question: Will they believe it?)

By now it no longer matters whether we believe, only that we acquiesce. And we do acquiesce. We expect the news to be slanted; we expect the statesman to lie; we expect the politician to make deals; we expect the advertisement to be false; we expect the repairman to cheat us; we expect the fight to be fixed; we expect men to place self-interest above any conceivable social end.

And when our expectations are fulfilled — when the fraud is finally revealed — we are never surprised, and rarely angry. Publicly and before the children, we deplore it. Privately, we admire its audacity, and marvel that it went undetected for so long. We sharpen our wits on its details (but never its cause) and are wiser citizens for what it has taught us.

THE UNLUCKY young men of TV, whose downfall we shall applaud as all good Philistines must, haven't really harmed us. They haven't violated our innocence. We had no innocence. We never did believe.

That is the crime we have committed, not against ourselves alone, but against our children, our country and even the broken victims of prostituted television. It is a crime that renders us morally unfit to judge those who have betrayed us. They have been judged enough already. They have suffered the anguish of exposure; their lives have been soiled; one or two of them may go to jail on peripheral charges of perjury; the networks and sponsors who financed their trickery and sold it and made millions from it have virtuously cast them into limbo.

Let's forget the whole sad mess. Let's close the book and wait for the next show, Congressional or quiz. Let's remember with John C. Doerfer, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, that "sometimes we have to endure ill for the over-all public good. We can't have everything perfect."

Of course we can't. We don't even expect it. Yet there are occasions, late at night and alone, when I'm touched by the chill apprehension that we no longer live in America, we merely occupy her; that we no longer love her, we only sit in the bleachers and root.

DILEMMA OF SOVIET TRADE . . *by Harold J. Burman*

MR. KHRUSHCHEV'S proposal, reiterated during his visit to this country, for the negotiation of a Soviet-American trade agreement has elicited some indications in Washington that we might be ready to ease present restrictions on trade with the USSR in return for a settlement of lend-lease, or some other concession. But, as Governor Rockefeller pointed out last week to the New York Board of Trade, the question of finding a suitable *quid pro quo* does not go to the heart of the matter. The real problem is whether, in view of the nature of the USSR's foreign-trade system, we can trade extensively with that country without danger to our own system.

Mr. Rockefeller has advanced a series of conditions for East-West trade which, in effect, would "decommunize" Kremlin trade policies and make them conform to the principles of free multilateral trade designed for market economies. Since Mr. Khrushchev is not likely to agree to such conditions, the question still remains whether a mutually advantageous expansion of trade between the United States and the USSR is possible.

There can be no intelligent response to the question without an understanding of how the Soviet system of foreign trade operates. Also we must face the fact that any agreement to do business with the Soviet Union will require a new type of cooperation between the federal government and American importers and exporters.

SOVIET foreign trade is conducted entirely by state agencies, operating under a national economic plan. At present there are twenty-eight separate organizations, called "combines," each possessing a monopoly of export and/or import transactions in a particular sphere of the economy. Thus, for example, all Soviet exports and imports of lumber and lumber products such as cellulose and paper are transacted by the "All-Union Export-Import Combine Eksportles" — or just "Exportles" (*les* being the Russian word for "lumber"). Similarly, all exports and imports of oil and oil products are carried out by "Soiuzneftexport."

Each of these foreign-trade combines is a legal entity, a legal person; that is, it may in its own name acquire rights in property, incur obligations and sue and be sued, and is responsible for its debts out of those assets which are within its power of free disposition. It receives a charter which enumerates its powers and declares the amount of its chartered capital. The Soviet state —i.e., the state treasury—is not liable for the obligations of the combine, and the combine in turn is not liable for the obligations of the Soviet state or of any organization other than itself. The combine appears in foreign markets in the guise,

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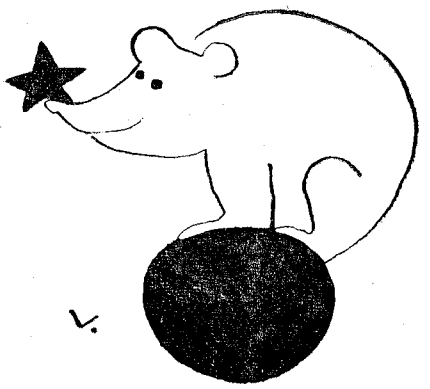


so to speak, of a capitalist trader, and its techniques of trade are more or less normal. It fully accepts the traditional institutional framework of commercial custom which is the common heritage of exporters, importers, bankers, shipowners, marine underwriters and others engaged in foreign trade throughout the world. The Soviet law and practice regarding FOB and similar contracts, letters of credit and other financing devices, ocean bills of lading, etc., do not differ basically from those of Western countries which are heirs to the "law merchant."

ON THE other hand, each combine is subordinate administratively to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade. The Minister appoints the head of the combine, and its profits —after commissions and bonuses are distributed—are ultimately returned to the state treasury. And, above all, the combine's purchases and sales are within limits set by the national economic plan for the economy as a whole. More precisely, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, which runs the Soviet economy (and of which the Minister of Foreign Trade is a member), allocates export contingents to various administrative agencies which allocate them in turn to their subordinate state business enterprises; on the basis of a corresponding export plan, the foreign-trade combine then procures the export goods from those enterprises. Similarly, in importing, the foreign-trade combine, on the basis of the import plan handed down to it by the Ministry, gets specifications from the ultimate domestic user and then goes into the foreign market to procure the goods. In other words, the combine is an export-import broker for Soviet producing and consuming organizations—all of which are, of course, managed by state officials subordinate ultimately to the council.

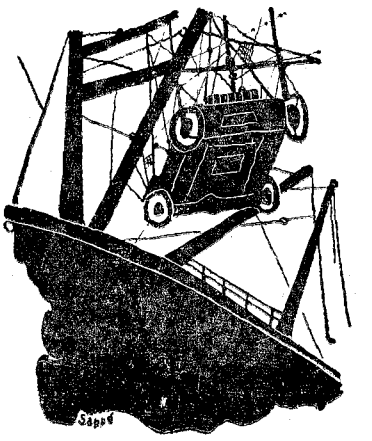
The export and import practices of the Ministry of Foreign Trade are thus bound to reflect the economic policies of the Council of Ministers and of the State Planning Committee which is attached to the council. Mr. Khrushchev, who is the head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is also Chairman of the Council of Ministers, so that the export and import policies of the Ministry of Foreign Trade are also bound to reflect the political goals of the party.

However, the experience of four decades teaches that the Soviet leadership is very reluctant to sacrifice long-range economic objectives for the sake of immediate political gains. While willing to spend a certain amount of money for immediate political purposes, the bulk of its foreign trade is conceived as a means of achieving national economic independence, rapid industrialization and the building up of reserves. Even now, when the Soviet economy has reached the point where it is possible for it to afford some international adventures, *usually* the Russians get as much in economic terms as they give, even to the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Although the Russians have occasionally been guilty of "dumping"—in the sense of selling at abnormally low prices—the great bulk of their exports are sold at the highest price obtainable.

Thus the power which the Soviet Union gains from the absolute centralization of its foreign trade has limitations. If the Ministry of Foreign Trade, in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, decides that there would be distinct political advantages in expanding exports of machinery to Argentina, for example, there are going to be several other ministries to report on how that would affect the development of the internal economy.

IT WOULD be interesting to be able to listen in on such a debate. During an interview which I had with the Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade Borisov in Moscow two years ago, I said that American businessmen would like to know more about how Soviet foreign trade is planned. He replied, "How we plan our foreign trade is our own business and we are not going to tell you or anyone else!"—and he smiled. But in fact we can tell a good deal about Soviet foreign-trade policies by observing their operation in world markets, and especially by studying the bilateral trade agreements which the Soviet Union has entered into with non-Communist countries. These agreements constitute a bilateral program for mutual deliveries of goods between two countries, with each government agreeing to issue licenses for the export or import of particular goods, in particular quantities, over a particular period of time—a year, three years, in some cases even five years. Such agreements were common among Western European countries immediately after the war, when exchange problems were acute. The Communist countries have them with each other, and there are some thirty such agreements now in force between the Soviet Union and non-Communist countries, and some 240 all told between Communist countries and non-Communist countries.

It is apparent that the planning, administration and operation of a system of foreign trade such as the Soviets' is made easier by these agreements, which enable the Soviet Council of Ministers to make an allocation of export contingents among its subordinate industries. Similarly, import planning can be geared into the bilateral program of exchanges. Of course the trade agreement is not self-executing; particularly in the case of a free economy, a government cannot commit its private



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traders by such an agreement, but can only commit itself in advance to issue licenses if contracts are negotiated. Also the planned economy may not fulfill the agreement—though techniques are available for encouraging fulfillment and for counteracting delinquencies.

THE reported trade agreements which the Soviet Union has entered into with France, Sweden, West Germany and other countries of Western Europe indicate a definite pattern. In general, the Soviet Union attempts more or less to balance its trade bilaterally, and also to distribute it widely. Typically, such agreements will provide for total annual trade of about $100 million to $200 million with each of the major Western European countries.

Now of course such bilateral agreements are a limitation upon the freedom of action of private traders; they violate the principle of free multilateral trade. The Soviet government's agreement with the Yugoslav government, for example, to import leather from Yugoslavia adversely affects American leather exporters who might otherwise be able to compete on the Soviet market. I know that personally, because when I was in Moscow four years ago I tried to interest a Soviet import combine in the purchase of American leather. I got nowhere, and when Borisov, in the interview of two years ago to which I have already referred, called United States trade policy "discriminatory," and insisted that in contrast the Soviet Union stood for free multilateral trade, I said to him: "I represent an American leather exporter; if I can show you that his leather is cheaper and better than the leather you now get from Yugoslavia, will you buy it?" He replied, "No. We have a trade agreement with Yugoslavia."

Despite the fact that such bilateralism violates American free-trade principles, it is probably the best solution to the problem which the Soviet foreign-trade system poses for free economies. In the first place, under our system of export controls we have already decided that the principles of free multilateral trade are not applicable to trade with Communist countries. Secondly, a bilateral trade agreement could put Soviet-American trade on a basis of reciprocity which it now lacks. At present the Soviet government plans and conducts its trade with the United States from the point of view of the national advantages that might accrue to the Soviet Union; the private American trader who deals with a Soviet foreign-trade combine is necessarily concerned only with his own profit—an objective which may or may not correspond with American national interests.

SPECIFICALLY, a trade agreement of the kind proposed could promote our national—and international—interest in the following ways: (1) our government could assure a supply of some Soviet products which our importers want but which are not now available because the Russians are selling them under trade agreements with other countries; (2) it could assure the purchase by the Soviets of some products they now procure from our exporters' competitors in other countries; (3) it could prevent purchase by the Russians of very small quantities of machinery bought merely as models to be copied (a practice of which we often complain); (4) the extra bargaining power which the Soviet combines sometimes derive from their monopolistic character could be partially offset; (5) a more efficient protection would be provided against the export of strategic goods than our present system of controls, since our government could determine in advance which products desired by the Soviets it would be willing to license; (6) we could obtain Soviet commitments not to dump; (7) some of the obstacles to normal trade relations created by the Soviet system could be reduced—i.e., we could perhaps secure Soviet commitments to give our traders direct access to their producing and consuming enterprises, to permit branch offices and licensing arrangements to be established, to give us more information about their foreign-trade plans, and to reduce some of their legal obstacles to trade.

From the Soviet viewpoint such an agreement would eliminate difficulties created by the enormous complexity of our present export-licensing system, and also might serve as a means of getting Congress to eliminate the discriminatory tariffs now imposed on imports of Soviet goods as well as the very narrow limits (six months) on commercial credits which may be extended, under the Johnson Act, to Soviet combines.

IN JUNE, 1958, Mr. Khrushchev proposed a Soviet-American trade agreement in a letter to President Eisenhower. The letter listed many types of peacetime industrial products which the Soviet Union would like to purchase here, and many types which the Soviet Union would offer to sell us. It also proposed that American specialists be sent to the Soviet Union and that licensing agreements could be made in individual cases. It suggested that a very large expansion of Soviet-American trade would raise questions concerning the possibility of long-term credits, but added that "of course, it is possible to begin the development of commerce on the basis of reciprocal deliveries."

President Eisenhower's reply stated that "the United States favors the expansion of peaceful trade with the Soviet Union," but it rejected the bid for an intergovernmental agreement:

> As you know, United States export and import trade is carried on by individual firms and not under governmental auspices. There is no need, therefore, to formalize relations between United States firms and Soviet trade organizations. Soviet trade organizations are free right now, without any need for special action by the United States Government, to develop a larger volume of trade with firms in this country.... Furthermore, many of the more important Soviet trade items mentioned in your letter are accorded duty-free entry into the United States. While the extension of long-term credits for Soviet purchases in the United States would raise complex legal and political questions, the normal commercial credit terms presently available to Soviet trade organizations permit the further expansion of trade between our two countries.

While it is undoubtedly true that Soviet-American trade could be expanded without any changes in ex-

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isting American governmental or legal policies or practices, it is also true that American restrictions place severe obstacles in the path of such an expansion. The products which Khrushchev proposed to buy from American firms are, for the most part, neither on the "Positive List" of strategic exports nor on the special list of "peaceful" goods subject to general license for the Soviet area. Each item requires, therefore, a validated license, and there can be no advance assurance that such licenses will be granted. Since the items mentioned by Khrushchev for the most part comprise industrial plant and equipment, American manufacturer-exporters would have to conduct elaborate preparations in order to make bids; few firms would be willing to go to this expense without advance assurance that export licenses would be granted. As to Soviet exports to the United States, while it is true—as the President stated—that some of the products listed by Khrushchev are duty-free, others (such as manganese) are subject to a tariff rate far higher than that which is applied to the same products imported from other countries; and even those which are duty-free may fall within various other import restrictions. Also, the restriction of private commercial credits to six months is onerous in many cases.

I BELIEVE that it was a mistake for us to reject Khrushchev's proposal out of hand and to treat it, as it was almost universally treated by the American press, as "mere propaganda." The Soviet system of foreign trade creates for us a serious dilemma. But we cannot escape that dilemma by ignoring it. It is the system under which the foreign trade of the entire Communist world is conducted; and it is a system which is likely to be with us for a long time to come. It is not true that our existing commercial and legal framework is adequate to accommodate Soviet-American trade. Moreover, to state, as our government officials have repeatedly stated, that the Russians are really only interested in buying strategic goods, or in obtaining huge credits, and that they really have nothing to sell us, is no answer to a concrete proposal to exchange peaceful products. If it is true that the offer is a mere bluff, then the best answer is to "call" it. If it is not a bluff, then the best answer is still to put down our chips. By withdrawing from the game at this point we avoid, it is true, the very difficult readjustment of existing concepts of the relationship between business and government which would be required by negotiation of an intergovernmental trade agreement for the mutual exchange of goods—something we have never before done. But without such a readjustment of existing concepts we shall not be able effectively to trade with, or effectively to compete with, the Communist system.

ROTC: Failure of a Mission . . *by Gene M. Lyons*

THERE ARE units of the Army, Navy and Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps on more than three hundred college and university campuses across the country. At least once a week, 250,000 undergraduates put on uniforms to march, maneuver and take instruction in weaponry, tactics and military administration. This is a sizable commitment in terms of student effort. It is also of little practical value. What the students learn in ROTC bores them, gives them a dim view of what their military service holds in store, and has so little effect that almost all they learn has to be learned over again once the young officers enter on active duty.

The trouble is that while the armed forces want to attract some of the best students into the service as career officers, they treat them as if they were immature high school sophomores. Young officers bound for duty on nuclear-powered submarines and supersonic aircraft need instruction in mathematics and physics. Instead, they are forced to give up academic time to the nuts-and-bolts of pre-atomic warfare. College and university administrators, even though they maintain that ROTC units are a genuine contribution to national defense, often give the program less attention than the Junior Prom.

THIS being the situation, it would seem that things could work out if everyone just gave more time and thought to the ROTC, and the program made more truly a part of the student's educational experience. Such a program would include completely voluntary participation, less military training on the campus, and an increased number of specialized and liberal courses useful to men in their military service.

This, of course, is easier said than done. It has, moreover, little meaning unless seen against the purposes the ROTC is supposed to serve. The ROTC was originally established and long maintained as part of a system of citizen reservists that lay at the heart of American military policies. *Today, however, it is a vast recruiting device for the professional officer corps.* This is no accident of time or history. Factors that once made the reserve system practical no longer exist. A large, standing military force is now in existence which requires a great number of well-trained professionals of intelligence and skill. Today, our colleges and universities are the largest repositories of the talented manpower the services need and the ROTC is the source through which they hope to get their share. Any effort to improve the ROTC program in terms of making it more attractive and stimulating for col-

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lege students, therefore, presupposes that civilian colleges and universities should, in fact, be recruiting grounds for the professional officer corps. Here we run into trouble.

Traditionally (at least in the popular image), the professional officer came from the service academies. The ROTC, in the last ten years, has offered college students an alternative to being drafted as privates or seamen, but was obviously never thought of as a substitute for West Point and Annapolis. Yet the fact is that the service academies are no longer able to furnish all the young officers needed to lead a professional military force of 2,500,000 men.

One solution, of course, would be to expand the service-academy system. But do we really want to? There are at least two compelling reasons for not doing so. First, there is the grave possibility of developing an inbred elite of sizable proportions in an important professional group—a vital consideration in a society where diversity and social mobility undergird many basic liberties. And second, only through an expansion program that would, at best, duplicate the civilian system of higher education, or, at worst, be an inferior substitute, could the academies offer the broad educational background required by the military today.

An alternate solution would be to force the military to choose the additional officers they need from among those young men who do not attend college. In this connection, we must remember that we are seeking, through private and public scholarship and student-aid programs, to eliminate economic barriers to higher education. Do we want to deprive the military of the same kind of opportunity to attract young men of talent and promise into the ranks of its leadership as we give General Motors, B.B.D.&O., and Colgate-Palmolive?

If, therefore, we view the problem faced by the armed forces with serious concern, we have to begin to figure out how to make more college graduates look forward to careers with the military. Despite steps already taken by the military departments, ROTC-trained officers are not staying in the service in large or even

adequate numbers. Some of the reasons lie in the services themselves: low pay, a discouraging promotion system, difficult family conditions, and the discipline and callousness to individual problems implicit in the nature and size of the military establishment. But beyond these, an important reason is that, for the most part, these young officers never intended to make the military a career when they entered the ROTC in the first place. The fundamental transformation of the ROTC to a source of professional officers has simply not gotten across to the most important people involved: the students.

NO CHANGE in the ROTC program is by itself going to remedy this fundamental failing. Military life, from the point of view of pay, promotion, intellectual satisfaction, family security and social acceptance, will simply have to be made more attractive. This is a task for the President, Congress, public leaders and opinion-makers at all levels, and the military themselves. But in this process, a good deal can also be done with ROTC campus activities to stimulate students' interest in the military as a career.

The ROTC programs now offered on college campuses fail seriously in this regard. For the most part, the courses are vocationally-oriented, particularly in the Army and Navy programs. The curriculum is fragmentized and has little intellectual content; relief from technical instruction comes only in courses in military and naval history. The Air Force goes farther than the other services in the area of social sciences, including in its curriculum courses in international relations, geography, psychology and administration. In all three services, however, the instruction in social-science-type courses is usually way below par. Not only are the military instructors not prepared to teach the social sciences, but they are forced to rely on inadequate, service-prepared texts that are neither very objective nor very exciting. The results of all these efforts are frustrated officers, angry faculty and disdainful students.

In some institutions, this unhappy situation has been avoided. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, for example, the Navy has a special program in which it generally keeps out of the student's way except to remind him that he is, in fact, going into the Navy, and that there are a few basic things about being a naval officer he had better know. The interests in such a program are mutual: the Navy is anxious to have M.I.T.-trained engineers in its ranks, and M.I.T. is professionally interested in the problems of the Navy and wants to offer its graduates the opportunities in nuclear propulsion and electronics that naval service opens up. Nevertheless, M.I.T. was not ready to accept the prescribed naval ROTC program and the Navy was sufficiently covetous

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of the M.I.T. product to know when to stop insisting.

At Princeton, too, the faculty and administration put their minds to the task and developed a number of courses within academic departments to replace military-developed Army courses. Similar efforts, on a less ambitious scale, have been made at Harvard, Yale and Ohio State University. The Air Force has invited all colleges and universities with Air Force ROTC units to substitute academic courses where possible, or to staff the regular Air Force course with civilian instructors. Few colleges have taken up the challenge, however. For one thing, the Air Force itself is the judge of what are "fit" substitute courses; and, for another, few college instructors are anxious to get involved in the military programs at the expense of their own work and the regard of their professional colleagues.

IN MOST colleges and universities, therefore, the question remains to be answered: How can we meet the responsibility of preparing young men for military careers? Leaving aside the doubtful probability of a complete metamorphosis of attitudes and values, the formula can now be stated in some detail:

1. The military officers now on campus are there to do three jobs: to teach technical military subjects; to give a special military "twist" to non-technical subjects included in the ROTC curriculum; and, through counseling, observation and their very presence in uniform, to recruit the most highly motivated students into the career service. The third function is the only legitimate one the military have in the college community, and even this should be carried out in conjunction with an over-all college program on career opportunities. Technical subjects should be left to summer training and post-commissioning service schools; non-technical subjects should be left to the college.

2. Compulsory ROTC, as practiced in most land-grant and state universities during the freshman and sophomore years, should be dropped. As college enrollments increase, compulsory ROTC will become an increasingly uneconomical affair. The factor of compulsion will, moreover, always tend to negate any efforts to point out to students the comparative advantages of a military career.

3. The problems involved in developing a pre-professional program for a military career need study by joint administration and faculty committees wherever ROTC units are located. This does not mean that Brown and Iowa State should try to duplicate the curricula at the service academies. It is more and better education that officers need, not more military training. Indeed, recent curriculum changes at West Point and Annapolis have been in this direction. Where, after study, it nevertheless seems clear that a worthwhile program, *from the viewpoint of the students and the career service,* is not possible, then steps should be taken to drop ROTC.

The kind of program that could then emerge where ROTC is retained would not, it must be admitted, completely satisfy the vast majority of students. Only abolition of the draft would do this. But these students would at least be relieved of what they now call "Mickey Mouse" courses and be given the opportunity to devote their full time and energies to the best education their college or university can provide. For those who are inclined to consider a military career seriously or who (and they are many) have no particular career plans, such a program would do more to excite their interest than the uninspiring experience they now have to go through.

The idea of consciously preparing young men for military careers is undoubtedly hard for many faculty members to accept. Perhaps only this need be said: Even if one seriously believes that the abolition of armaments, soldiers and war is the only solution to the present military dilemma, there is no expectation that force will soon be universally abandoned as an instrument of national policy. This does not mean that one should succumb to the pressure of present realities at the expense of deeply felt principles. It is, however, reason to think carefully before leaving the field to those who are less concerned with the meaning of war and peace.

THE MACMILLAN VICTORY . . *by R. T. McKenzie*

London

BRITISH politics will never be quite the same as a result of the general election of October 8, 1959. The actual details of the Tory victory are not nearly as impressive as the newspapers have tended to imply. Certainly the victory cannot be described as a "landslide." The Conservatives, it is true, increased their parliamentary majority to about one hundred, but there was no significant increase in their popular support. At the previous election, in 1955, they captured 49.7 per cent of the popular vote; this time they got 49.4 per cent. In other words, a slightly smaller proportion of voters wanted to see a Conservative government this time than in 1955. But with a smaller proportion of the vote, the Conservatives won more seats, mainly because the Labour Party's strength was drained away by Liberal gains in popular support. The Liberals doubled their popular vote, but made no net gain of seats in the House of Commons, where they will still be only six Liberals in a House of 630. A political party whose total Commons membership can still travel in one taxi is obviously a long way from forming a government.

It is worth noting also that the

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total vote obtained by the Conservatives was approximately 250,000 fewer than the vote polled by the Labour Party in 1951 (the highest poll ever recorded by any party, although it did not bring Labour victory on that occasion). Nor is the present Conservative majority of one hundred very impressive when compared with the majorities won by the party in 1924 (223), 1931 (427) or 1935 (247).

In addition, Conservative gains were by no means uniform throughout the country. This state of affairs will not surprise Americans who are used to regional variations in party support, but in British terms this is a most surprising development, since normally the "swing" from one party to another is amazingly uniform throughout the whole island.

But this time the Conservative gains were concentrated mainly in the Midlands (a district centered on industrial Birmingham) and in the South of England, including London. But there was an almost equal swing to Labour in the industrial areas of Scotland and in certain of the Lancashire textile districts. The explanation is almost certainly economic. There is virtually no unemployment in the Midlands and the South, while there is a good deal in Lancashire and in Scotland. (Even there unemployment is not high by U.S. standards—it runs to about 3 or 4 per cent—but it has been persistent over the past year or two, and Scotland and Lancashire are bitterly aware that they are not sharing in the general national prosperity.)

On the other hand, the workers of the Midlands and the South have clearly accepted the Conservative slogan, "You never had it so good." (Actually, the slogan was phrased in a rather more genteel fashion in the huge and expensive Tory advertising campaign: "Life *is* better with the Conservatives. . . . Don't let Labour ruin it.") The result was a really spectacular turnover of seats in some urban regions. For the first time in twenty years, for example, the Conservatives hold more than half the seats in Birmingham. And in the county of London, which has been ruled in local government affairs by the Socialists for a quarter of a century, the Conservatives have now managed to break even in seats. There are a half-dozen Conservative constituencies in which "New Towns" had been built in a deliberate attempt to drain off some of London's teeming population and it had been predicted that these "immigrants" from London would carry their Tory politics with them.

BUT THIS did not happen, and it may be that we are now witnessing what *The Economist* calls, in an ugly but an appropriate phrase, the "de-proletarianization" of the British working class. Macmillan proclaimed what may become a historic phrase in his television appearance to thank the voters: "The class war is now over." This proclamation may be a little premature; but certainly, as far as the Midlands and the South of England are concerned, hostilities have been suspended. What we have witnessed, indeed, is the first dramatic evidence, in political terms, of what might be called the Americanization of the British working class. A leading Canadian journalist talked with me recently about an article he was writing called "Is Britain More Prosperous Than Canada?". My comment was that the answer was obviously "no," if one judged by the absolute standard of living in the two countries. But the reason why Britain has given the impression of greater prosperity than Canada in recent years is partly because of the exceedingly low level of unemployment in this country, but even more important because Britain has moved for the first time to the position where the enjoyable gadgets of modern life have suddenly come within the reach of almost the whole population. Everyone has or can soon get television, home appliances and even motor cars which in the past were the proud possession of only 10 or 15 per cent of the population.

The result has been that in this campaign the mass of people appeared fairly indifferent to the Labour Party's assault on the huge (and untaxed) capital gains being made on the stock market, and to the evidence on every hand that the rich were getting richer even faster than the poor were getting richer.

Also, of course, the Conservative Party, the most intelligent right-wing party in the world, was wise enough during its eight years in office not to dismantle, but to improve, the welfare state; and it also made not the slightest gesture of hostility toward the trade unions. The Conservatives, in other words, did nothing to rouse the hostility of the traditional Labour voter, but invited him instead to take part in the exciting prospect of the affluent society. The ground was simply taken from under the Labour Party; its television propaganda was technically brilliant, but it tended to concentrate on the seamy side of life in Britain, where there are still millions of homes in which no human being should be expected to live, and where pensions for the elderly are pitiable by North American standards. This was perfectly legitimate political comment, but it gave the impression that the Labour Party was preoccupied with the hangover of social evils from the past, rather than with the material joys of today and tomorrow.

It was also evident that the public was wholly uninterested in the Labour Party's catalogue of "Tory crimes." The Conservative record in external affairs, involving as it

Cummins (London Daily Express)
"I'm MacSummit, after all!"

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does the Suez fiasco, Cyprus, the Holla murders and the government's rejection of its own commission which reported on Nyasaland, was enough to drive the traditionally neutral *Observer* and the *Spectator* (normally friendly to the Conservatives) into the opposition camp. But clearly this was an egghead reaction. The public couldn't have cared less and indeed there is a good deal of evidence that the attack at Suez, on balance, won the Conservatives more votes than it lost.

THE PROSPECTS ahead for Mr. Macmillan are exciting. He emerges as a political figure of enormous power, leading a party which has had a blood transfusion of new and younger M.P.s, some of whom are men of very great promise. And yet he has several reasons for moving carefully. The first obvious one is that his position in the House of Commons looks more impressive than the analysis of the popular vote would suggest. If three voters in every hundred were to desert him at the next election, his majority would melt away. This is perhaps the surest guarantee that his government will avoid becoming fat and slothful as did most of the Conservative governments of the inter-war years.

But in addition, Mr. Macmillan must keep a careful eye on his own right-wing. Last June, I spent an evening with a group of Conservative back-benchers and, in the course of conversation, put to them the question: "What will happen to your party if it comes back at the next election with a majority of one hundred?" One reply has stuck in my memory: "It will mean the end of Butler and his Tory socialism." The back-bencher went on to explain that the Conservative Party had been, as he put it, "terrorized" by Mr. Butler and the Tory left-wing ever since 1945. The Butlerites had been warning the party that, unless they were prepared to accept all of the social changes introduced by the Labour Government of 1945, they would never regain power. And once power had been regained in 1951, the Butlerites had gone on warning that the Conservatives could hold office only so long as they

placated the trade unions and continued to bear the huge taxation burden required to pay for the welfare state. But, said my back-bench friend, "if we win the next election and trounce the Socialists three times in a row, we will not again be terrorized; we will insist on a genuinely Conservative policy." By which, I gathered, he meant above all else a really drastic cut in income tax even though this might well mean a considerable cutback in welfare-state spending.

These old-guard spokesmen may well be outnumbered by the new, progressive Tories who are emerging under Macmillan's leadership. And it must be remembered, of course, that Macmillan himself is well to the left of center in the Conservative Party. Yet there are obvious tensions within the party which could cause real trouble within the next four or five years.

THE LABOUR PARTY now at last is confronted with the moment of truth. It took forty-five years for Labour to win its first (and only) working majority in the House of Commons. By 1950, the party had lost its working majority and at each of the three successive elections its parliamentary strength has declined. In just under four years, Hugh Gaitskell has done an amazing job in reuniting the party and in winning it away from its more archaic principles (such as the one, fatally embedded in the party's constitution, which pledges it to work for the "common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange"). And Gaitskell has managed to do this despite the fact that he has had no really able ally on the Right; he has had to work through Aneurin Bevan and the left-wing rebels of yesterday.

Yet it is clear that Gaitskell's job is only half done; he has not succeeded in transforming the public image of the Labour Party and until he does so it will remain the party of perpetual opposition. In its present state, the party has reached dead end; it is no longer able to rely even on working-class support. It almost certainly polls a smaller proportion of working-class voters than does the Democratic Party in the comparable Northeastern urban areas of the United States.

Logically, it could be argued that the Labour Party leaders ought to encourage their left-wing and die-hard Socialist elements to "hive off," and the remainder of the party should seek a working alliance with the emergent Liberals. But there are desperately difficult obstacles to any such development. On the one hand, there is the fact that Joe Grimmond, leader of the Liberal Party, is now talking of dismantling certain features of the welfare state. He has been arguing that the main purpose of state action should be to assist those genuinely in need, and he appears to doubt the wisdom of the all-inclusive insurance principle which underlies almost all of Labour's thinking about social welfare.

There is also the intense hostility among the older elements in the Labour Party toward any suggestion that they should work with the Liberals. Their attitude is easy to understand, since it is undoubtedly a fact that Labour's previous experiments in taking office—in 1924 and in 1929—on the basis of an unwritten alliance with the Liberals, had disastrous electoral consequences.

Mr. Gaitskell's task is therefore not easy; yet one thing is certain and that is that he must act with utmost speed and ruthlessness in reshaping the party while the lessons of defeat are writ so large on the walls of history that even its most dense members cannot fail to read them.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

On the Art of Book Publishing

Emile Capouya

READING maketh a full man, said Bacon. He was talking of books, for newspapers and magazines were yet to be invented. Now we do have a periodical press, and we know it has its uses; but it is concerned with reporting events as they occur and arguing issues as they arise; it is concerned with what is little more than the raw material of books. Books still provide the reading that makes the full man. They embody our best-organized efforts to turn our experience into knowledge; they are the most important vehicle for literary art. Sooner or later, if we inquire how we set about nourishing, in Bacon's sense, the man and the citizen, we must talk of books. And in this connection, one important question is, how do books get published, and is it well or ill with us in that department?

For the purposes of such an inquiry, book publishing can be conveniently divided into four main categories, according to the agency that does the publishing: the Government Printing Office, the university and denominational presses, the so-called subsidized publishers and the commercial houses. The importance and influence of the government's publishing program is not generally appreciated, but official records and transactions, and the special interests of the governmental departments, provide matter for an enormous number of books. They are generally distributed at nominal prices made possible by subsidy, a levy upon the public purse that is presumed to be in the public interest.

The second category, the mixed one of the university and denominational presses, is the outlet for scholarly and religious works. Many of these books, too, are sold at low prices that reflect subsidy, whether contributed by an endowed press, by an interested organization, or by the author.

Next comes the class of *publishers* that issues the books we used to refer to as "privately printed," i.e., printed at the author's expense. In this category, there is no *a priori* restriction on subject matter or intended audience; the publisher undertakes, for a price, to print and distribute whatever the author may choose to write. To American publishers as a whole, there is something a trifle unseemly about allowing authors such unbridled freedom, and perhaps that is why there is no adequate trade term to designate the houses that do it. They are sometimes called "subsidized publishers" (though we have seen that subsidy is common to other areas of publishing), and sometimes "vanity presses."

But there are better reasons than mere pique behind the publishing fraternity's distaste for these firms. For one thing, the vanity press arrangement is openly exploitative: the author bears the major expense and risk; the publisher has little control over, and sometimes little interest in, the quality of the books to which he lends his imprint. On average, the books are very bad. Moreover, subsidy arrangements provide for royalty scales (commonly 40 per cent of the selling price of the book) that are exceedingly high in proportion as the publisher's expectation of sales is exceedingly small. In the unlikely event that a book published on such terms does sell well, the publisher must face paying a punitive royalty on a large number of copies —a prospect to daunt the stoutest heart in the business community. Nevertheless, setting aside the abuses of the system, the essential feature of the subsidized publishing arrangement is that it permits an author to publish what he likes, provided he can pay the bill. That privilege is granted him in no other area of publishing.

These, then, are three "special" modes of producing and distributing books, and they will warrant a closer look after we have considered the enterprise commonly implied by the word "publishing" — the commercial book house.

Whether he deals in books for the *general reader*, in texts, in technical works, or in other specialized publications, the distinguishing feature of the commercial publisher is that he is the classic image of the small or middle-sized capitalist entrepreneur, risking his own money to publish books in the expectation of realizing a profit on their sale. Literature, law, medicine, pure science, social science, philosophy, history, music, art — the sum of our culture is entrusted to this manufacturer and merchant, who undertakes to perpetuate the record of the race in return for a money payment. His function is so important that it is worth our while to look into the manner in which he discharges it — with particular reference to the commercial conditions that determine his actions.

TO begin with, a book has a physical form; as soon as it can be said to be a book, it it at least a handwritten or typewritten manuscript. The publisher's business is to see that many copies of the physical book are made available to readers, and to that end the manuscript is corrected, type is set from it, and sheets are printed and bound. Once in the hands of a reader, the book is subject to wear and obsolescence, and may require to be replaced—reprinted in its original form, reprinted with revisions or additions to the text, reissued in a different format, and so on. All those operations cost money, and, generally speaking, no new book will be published, and no old one reprinted, unless the publisher is assured of a profit on his investment. If there is no immediate market, on attractive terms, for Shakespeare, then Shakespeare is not published. Should you think the example far-fetched, try to recall when you last saw a legible, intelligently edited, reasonably priced single-volume American edition of the Works.

Indeed, we must revise our earlier statement. The commercial publisher undertakes to perpetuate that portion of our cultural heritage for which he can find cash customers at any given moment. It would be unfair to blame him for the deficiencies of a system that has its cognates in every area of our economy—a system, moreover, that is the best now available for keeping at our disposal the funded knowledge of mankind. Yet the deficiencies are serious, and must be faced. Most of them proceed from the fact that the commerical publisher is ultimately responsible, not to culture, conscience, or craftsmanship, but to the profit-and-loss statement. It does not avail him to be in his own person a scholar or cultivated amateur: he is constrained to show a profit even on the books nearest his heart—or else he must turn to something more profitable. He is constrained, in other words, to extract a kind of subsidy from the book buyer,

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and yet the book buyer does not necessarily profit by the taste and knowledge of the publisher. Oddest of all, in getting the book buyer to pay him a sum covering cost, overhead and profit, the publisher gets no more—least of all the privilege of indulging his special tastes or exercising his special knowledge. In this light, the exchange of books for cash looks more like a ritual gesture than a rational exchange of values.

AT this point, my argument must seem paradoxical and wrong-headed to anyone whose thought has not taken such a turn independently. Indeed, I had to serve a good many years in the book trade before I felt forced to adopt so paradoxical and wrong-headed a view. In any case, one pointed question could put an end to my theoretical difficulties if they were not also real difficulties. The question is this: As a matter of common experience, and theory aside, doesn't the system work more or less well? The answer is no. Not if we have in mind the only relevant criterion of efficiency—how well it serves the reader who wishes to put himself in touch with the common stock of knowledge and inspiration. When such a reader enters a large bookshop, he may be overwhelmed by the evidence of the system's productive capacity—hundreds of new books! But suppose he wants to find a number of books dealing with a particular topic, including the classic treatments of the subject since its beginnings. In most cases, he will find no help in the bookshop, and must turn to public, university, or private libraries. And that means collections supported in the main by philanthropy or public funds. The bookshop, dealing chiefly in the current and topical, caters to the casual reader, the gift seeker, the buyer on impulse. The commercial system tends to reduce books to journalism, so that more and more they inform, entertain, or exhort at the level of the newspaper and magazine. Increasingly, books that attempt to fulfill their traditional role find no acceptance with the commercial publisher, who can legitimately plead "insufficient market."

Even the practice of publishing the complete works of important authors in uniform editions has been largely abandoned, so that the instrument for systematic study of a given writer is less and less available. Publishers say that the public taste has changed in this regard, that readers will no longer buy a ten-volume set of a favorite author. It may be true. If it is, what is the responsibility of the commercial canon in helping to bring it about—for instance, because high-rental space is at a premium in a bookshop, and the shopkeeper cannot afford to display costly sets with low turnover value? Commerce is a tyrant. The intellectual tools that are the special concern of readers and publishers are being cheapened and trivialized, and neither side has any recourse.

Thus far, we have discussed the commercial system's direct effect upon the reader's education and the publisher's professional satisfactions. In the long run, however, its most important effect on both is exerted indirectly, through the conditions it imposes on the author. Obviously, when economic considerations make the publisher look for ephemera that can return a profit in the shortest possible time, authors will be led to write books to that measure. On a generous average, the effective life of books of all kinds published by a trade house is six months. The back-list, officially regarded as the health and virtue of the trade, represents a very small proportion of the total number of books published. Moreover, back-list books are slow pay, and if it were not for the economies they permit—the fact that they are usually reprinted from existing plates, and require little or no editing and advertising—they would not be so cherished. Culturally speaking, the back-list is our civilization; from the business standpoint, it is a hedge against current mistakes.

The pressure that bears upon authors in this form is gross and blatant; it might very well leave mature, original spirits quite unscathed. But there is another force at work here about which no equivocation is possible. I mean the rate at which authors are paid.

Overhearing

You will go away some time.
Listen: bees will hum
hunting their flowers through the world
along corridors, their necessary line,

Till night comes over them
when stars weave wide gold cloth
with all of blue space between
on threads made real by time.

Then our one listening star
will coast along through the sky
afraid for awhile to breathe
lest it miss its corridor

The way we missed ours for long—
then these temporary meetings, then on
along our necessary line,
when you go away some time.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

The greater number of books are no longer written by clergymen supported by tithes or taxes, nor by gentlemen who enjoy a modest competence. They are written by people who derive their salaries from the industrial system. Few authors can hope to earn their living by writing; most cannot really afford to write at all. And that unfortunate state of affairs comes about largely because of the way in which income from the sale of books is divided between author and publisher. One contributes talent and labor to the joint product, the other capital and organization. Let us assume that the contribution on either side is of equal value. For his return, the publisher gets a profit that he calculates at an average 10 per cent of the wholesale price of the book (in practice the figure should be adjusted upward to something like 10 per cent of the retail price, if the publisher is reasonably efficient). This sum is net profit, figured after costs and overhead have been met. The significant point here is that overhead includes the publisher's own salary. As for the author, his average return is approximately 10 per cent of the retail price of his book, but out of it he must find costs, wages and profit too. It takes a clever man to find them.

I hope I may be forgiven for demonstrating what might have been taken for granted—that commercial publishing is a function of the capitalist system. In this case, if ever, the disparity between the rewards of primary producer and entrepreneur has important consequences. Society is the loser when authors must spend their best energies at some irrelevant if remunerative task, and must treat the serious business of their professional lives as an expensive hobby. *Doesn't the system work more or less well?* It is cause for amazement that it works at all.

In fulfilling his role, the publisher is not a villain but a victim—whether he knows it or not. He cannot choose to play the game on any other terms unless he has a private fortune and is willing to see it dissipated. Naturally, good luck and singularity of character on such a scale are not the rule in the book trade.

SUPPOSE the Government Printing Office were to abandon its traditional discretion and publish books of interest to the general reader, so that it might offer competition to the commercial houses. Suppose that in issuing works of fiction, biography, history, etc., the government were to maintain the standards of content and format set by its

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superb Yearbooks of Agriculture, and maintain its low prices, too. The benefits that would spring from such a publishing TVA, and its yardstick feature, are obvious—but what of its defects? Considering what governments are like, we cannot reasonably anticipate that there would be no real disadvantage in allowing the state to gain a foothold in still another important activity. The question is, how great a disadvantage? For the convenience of a public postal system, we are forced to endure the vagaries of the Postmaster General's literary taste and his notions of morality. That is galling, certainly, but on balance we are the winners. I think the same line of argument fits the proposal to have the government enter into competition with the commercial publisher.

The big drawback is that it gives the state another tool for making propaganda—what might be called creative censorship. The Voice of America and the United States Information Agency are good examples of what can be accomplished in this regard by policy and selective patronage. But what is abusive in these activities owes its existence to public toleration, as in the case of Mr. Summerfield. Naturally, a plan to help revivify our national life through a government publishing program presupposes, on the part of the citizens, an attitude very different from apathy. A really useful program of the kind we are discussing is unthinkable without a spiritual change in the electorate that would encourage the government to mind its manners in one department as in another. The reward we could expect from a properly functioning government press would be the partial safeguarding of our cultural wealth, now defenseless against commercial oversight and commercial greed. And the fact that all this would entail a change in our character as a people and the suppression of long-standing abuses does not seem to me to be so much an objection to the plan as an additional reason for urging it.

The object is to supplement and chasten the commercial publisher. Another way is to broaden the scope of the university and denominational presses by subsidy from public funds. The university press has taken its character from the Ph.D. system of certification, and has as its principal function the utterance of the books that doctoral candidates are compelled to write; the religious presses are at bottom the propaganda organs of one or another sectarian creed. Both groups, however, have a moral commitment to better things, and in practice few content themselves with publishing simulacra of scholarship or mere tracts. A little public money might encourage university and denominational presses to expand in a direction they have already shown a willingness to explore—that of publishing books that are important almost in inverse proportion to their ability to attract an audience.

Are these men honorable, can they be trusted? Already the universities get great sums of public money to spend directly (mainly on war preparations, it is true), not to mention their privileged tax position. The churches too are dispensed from paying a money tribute to Caesar (possibly in the hope that they will bless his eagles — in any case they have always done so). It would seem reasonable to bestow on such institutions, already trustees of so much of the public treasure, the very modest additional funds that would enable them to carry on with increased dash and sense of civic responsibility.

AGAIN, we have seen how the subsidized publishing firm has been stigmatized, for good and for whimsical reasons, as a "vanity press," and we have seen that it offers the unique advantage of freedom of expression to those authors who have a few thousand dollars to invest in themselves. If the vanity presses were appropriately regulated, i. e., prevented from overcharging for their services and required to provide services on a level with the best commercial standard, they could become a useful adjunct to the book-publishing system. Right now, authors concerned for their reputation avoid the vanity presses, but, properly purified and their stigma lived down, those firms could be an outlet for frivolity or genius such as the more solemn, more highly organized commercial publishers are not likely to provide.

Even more important, the vanity presses could provide facilities for cooperatives embracing producers and consumers, designed after the pattern of the book clubs. Today, the book clubs are involuntary cooperatives, with the defect that they reward their administrators too liberally and their subscribers not liberally enough. But setting aside that feature, and the inculcation of vulgarity that they can be charged with, there is much to be learned from their skill in distributing large quantities of books. It should be easy to organize cooperatives on the book-club model, whose objects would be to serve readers and reward authors; in such cooperatives, each subscriber could have a vote, and the opportunity to learn how to use it. A single reader is helpless before the market, but a group of readers, once organized, *is* a market. As a group, moreover, readers would have access to credit, and could become publishers, too. Here is a form of decentralization and do-it-yourself that has no Cloud-cuckoo-land overtones. It could be genuinely useful as a corrective to commercial publishing.

These observations, if brought to the attention of practicing publishers, will provoke ambivalent reactions. As men devoted to their profession, publishers are sensible of the defects in their practice. As men working within a commercial system, they are involved in its profit-goal, and scarcely capable of envisioning another. The devoted publisher's reaction to each new, worthy, unsalable manuscript is a groan. I have heard an intelligent and honest bookman object to paperbacks because their publisher must sell five times as many copies to earn the same profit as with hard-bound books. The enormity of his argument, and its perfect legitimacy on its own terms, are the real indictment of the commercial system.

Publishers, accordingly, are not likely to embrace my conclusions without reserve. But what I most fear is the criticism of those who may follow my argument with sympathy, but say at the end, "What then? You must know that the measures you propose—extension of the role of the Government Printing Office, extension of the role of the university press, the purification of the vanity houses and the introduction

In the Time of Fall

They were small waves,
more the likeness of time
than sorrow—
sorrow is great and breaks
along the beach
lonely under the search
of gulls and white
with seafoam:
crest and
sky the gulls carve—
these were sidelong,
hurrying swiftly
to the coming tide.
The bay lay curved
within the land,
gulls crossed the moon
southeast
the light came on
the hook of headland
beating up the course
of ships home.
The air was autumn.
More than the swiftness of her cheek
were the waves
shortly borne.

RALPH GUSTAFSON

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of cooperatives functioning through them—are the merest palliatives. They are intended to correct an evil that, on your own showing, is radical, and to which you plan to allow nearly the same scope as heretofore, namely, the entire commercial press. We have followed you thus far, putting up with your unpleasant truths and your misleading half-truths. But your arguments, if they mean anything, mean more than you have admitted." That is the criticism I most fear, because only a madman would feel no trepidation in suggesting, as I must, that it would take a full-scale social and political revolution before books could be published honestly in the United States.

Notes from the Future: Two Poets

HEART'S NEEDLE. By W. D. Snodgrass. Alfred A. Knopf. 62 pp. $3.75.

SELECTED POEMS. By Robert Duncan. City Lights Books (San Francisco). 80 pp. $1.

LETTERS. By Robert Duncan. Jonathan Williams (Highlands, N. C.). 30 pp. $8.

M. L. Rosenthal

"SNODGRASS," I recently heard a distinguished older poet say, "is frankly bourgeois. The rest of us try to hide our bourgeois nature from ourselves, but he is plainly and openly what he is." I suppose his calling Snodgrass bourgeois had something to do with this young writer's acceptance of simple, normal marital and domestic relationships as possible, and desirable, in themselves. In this sense he is uncritically "bourgeois"; he apparently has no bohemian suspicion that a good marriage in which husband, wife, and children are both affectionate and responsible to one another is necessarily death to the free, creative life.

Not that these are happy poems, as the pieces in John Ciardi's *I Marry You* are. In point of fact, the long title-sequence presents the poet in a state of deep soul-sickness because of his divorce and because of the dangers which a new marriage presents to his relationship with his baby daughter. Snodgrass, though much less violent, is a confessional poet like Robert Lowell, and he is writing about a stubborn if almost abject father-love hanging on to its object with animal persistence. The quietly satisfying bourgeois family is for him an ideal as genuine peace is an ideal for a world ravaged by actual and by cold war. The figure is one on which he depends repeatedly:

> Child of my winter, born
> When the new fallen soldiers froze
> In Asia's deep ravines and fouled
> the snows,
> When I was torn
>
> By love I could not still,
> By fear that silenced my cramped
> mind
> To that cold war where, lost, I could
> not find
> My peace in my will. . . .

The ten-part sequence takes us from the child's birth to the divorce, the second marriage, and the muted triumph that a second winter of separation should have been survived—"and you are still my daughter." Snodgrass has built a moving poem out of something we treat far too casually: early divorce, in which it is the love between children and their parents that receives the deepest wounds. The undramatic misery of the troubled father anxious to create common memories—pushing his child on a playground swing, learning to make omelettes and pancakes so he can feed her at home when she visits him, and so on—has great authority. Snodgrass gains it through a gift of understatement that is yet saturated with feeling:

> The window's turning white
> The world moves like a diseased heart
> packed with ice and snow.
> Three months now we have been
> apart
> less than a mile. I cannot fight
> or let you go.

Perhaps another "bourgeois" aspect of this poet's work lies in the kind of psychological problems he admits to having generally. In "April Inventory" he recites some of the lessons he has learned—that is, has *had* to learn—over the past year:

> I taught myself to name my name,
> To bark back, loosen love and crying;
> To ease my woman so she came,
> To ease an old man who is dying.
> I have not learned how often I
> Can win, can love, but choose to die.

Earlier in this same poem he mentions "my analyst," and perhaps that phrase too is peculiar to one kind of bourgeois life adjustment. But I think the older poet's real objection (I'm somehow sure it was really an objection, though it has a certain admiration in it too) was to the absence of hatred in the poems of *Heart's Needle.* Snodgrass pays token service to the usual creed of sophisticated aversion to Philistinism and commercialism, sounding something like a paler Cummings. But he accepts, always. The explosive anger of Lowell is nowhere to be found, and the truly striking notes are of a winning sensitivity and candor, and an ability to endure the rigors of experience with pathetic courage and a nostalgia paid in advance. These observations are not meant as moral judgments, but as a definition of the kind of energy his poems possess. I should add that he has a disciplined skill that is pure delight in the delicately modulated "The Operation," a poem detailing with the most vivid impressionism the successive physical sensations and shifts of awareness before and after surgery, and in the restrained sexuality of "Winter Bouquet"—two examples among several outstanding pieces. He is able to use description and imagery so suggestively that he can postpone explicit statement of feeling, when it is needed at all, to brief, strategic moments, usually at the very end of a poem. He uses this ability so tactfully in the "Heart's Needle"

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sequence that he sustains without faltering a theme that otherwise, over so long a haul, must have bogged him down in sentimentality. The poem remains true to its germinating feeling of quiet suffering, and to its author's special talents.

FEW POETS could be less alike than Snodgrass and Robert Duncan. Where Snodgrass is one kind of modern Classicist, master of a carefully defined range of sensibility, Duncan is a Romantic par excellence, reaching out in every direction for the secret of all realizations. Moreover, he resists Snodgrass' kind of surrender to life's common expectations and predicaments. He resists even the nonconformist tradition to which he himself belongs. For instance, he is tremendously indebted to William Carlos Williams' thought-mannerisms and cadenced style; but, unable to liberate himself from this and other such influences, he indulges his willful, didactic personality in such a way as to make his triumphs almost a conquest *over* style. "I attempt the discontinuities of poetry," he writes in *Letters,* and sets himself the program: "To interrupt all sure course of my inspiration."

> the addition of the un
> planned for interruption:
> a flavor stinking coffee
> (how to brew another cup
> in that Marianne Moore-
> E. P.-Williams-H. D.-Stein-
> Zukofsky-Stevens-Perse-
> surrealist-dada-staind
> pot) by yrs. R. D.

The result is an unusual richness and springiness of texture when Duncan is at his best. (For a poet of his powers, he is surprisingly inconsistent. Although he is forty years old—some seven years older than Snodgrass—he is only just now, in poems not yet printed in book form, coming into secure control of his work.) Duncan's "natural" lyric voice is a little thin. The effort, therefore, to give an emphatic personal stamp to his work—and because it is naturally so "transparent" he has been most susceptible to the cutting in of other voices than his own, from Dante's to Denise Levertov's—has led Duncan to a private *mystique* and theory. He has cultivated a profound faith that he is running along paths of fire traced out for him by the Masters; he must fulfill their work and, at the same time, achieve a break-through premised on all he has learned from them. "As we struggle towards life, it is thru our inventions that we offend the dead: as they in their time offended." *Letters* is a voyage of exploration into this aesthetic program and its implications for the whole of life. In verse and in prose, Duncan insists and intellectualizes, superimposing on his basic, uncomplicated melodic sense of style the mystical purpose implied in this voyage:

> .... Hollows
> of underfeelings revealed in all
> arrangements.
> The design, the drawing draws from us
> the secret of a dark from our darkness.

These lines are from "Metamorphosis," which, together with the poems on "the theme of Adam" and with "An Owl Is an Only Bird of Poetry," is the most compelling and least derivative section of *Letters.* Duncan's progress in recent years may be seen by comparing this book with the *Selected Poems,* which is much spottier. A few pieces in the latter book stand out sharply from the rest—notably the excited erotic tableau of "The Mirror," the brilliantly pathetic opening part of the "Coda" to *The Venice Poem,* and the unusually compressed "Processionals II." However, the usual yardsticks will not measure Duncan. For one thing, his poems in any one period are more or less interlocking, both in the actual continuity between one poem and the next and in the symbolic identifications toward which all direct themselves. For another, the mysticism is not merely a matter of general attitude, as it is, say, in Kathleen Raine, but of certain literal, Blakean intensities. "The vowels," writes Duncan, "are physical corridors of the imagination emitting passionately breaths of flame. In a poem the vowels appear like the flutterings of an owl caught in a web and give awful intimations of eternal life." The casual grossness of language in a poem like "Distant Counsels of Artaud," the unself-conscious sexual frankness of other poems, the blaspheming that again recalls Blake (whose references to "old Nobodaddy" were merely a function of his familiarity with the Eternal) are essential expressions of an indomitably mystic will.

Duncan moves all but blindly in his own orbit, yet insists that he sees all and sometimes does so indeed. At such moments we are in a realm of apperception a hundred times more meaningful than Snodgrass', though its atmosphere is always endangered by the clouds of rhetoric and of syntactic forcing. What with the pain the one poet so lucidly and objectively reports on from his experience of the well-known world, and the longing the other expresses to break out of the encompassing assumptions of that world—even its most revolutionary and "experimentalist" assumptions—it becomes clear that "acceptance" and "rejection" as frames of thought have become obsolete.

THE TWO writers curiously complement each other. They are each other's correctives, as it were. Together, they suggest the main preoccupations of the future for bourgeois and anti-bourgeois alike: the true relation of private sensibility to the realities of day-to-day life, and the need to establish a new symbolism to match the expanding creative potentialities of man.

LETTER from CHICAGO

Jean Martin

"GENIUS always comes from the direction in which no one is looking," and not only genius it would seem, but most of the important events in Chicago. The St. Lawrence Seaway, a source of extensive boredom to many Chicagoans during its dredging and construction, has only now gradually begun to seep into the public consciousness—in much the same way that the "Chicago school" of television (the easy-going soft-sell personified by Garroway, Kukla and Ollie, etc.) was mildly tolerated locally, then re-examined with good-natured delight after its "discovery" by the national audience. True, there had been some hullabaloo and fanfare before the Seaway opened, but most of it took the form of long, stately, educational-type TV programs replete with maps showing the city as the "hub" of an economically rehabilitated Midwest, 'way, 'way off in the future somewhere. The result was public apathy of almost overwhelming density.

The first awakening of a really alive interest in the Seaway came with the International Trade Fair, a kind of economic Disneyland which drew proportionate crowds to Navy Pier. Underscoring, in fact exaggerating, the potential benefits to be derived from direct import via the new super-highway to Europe, the fair offered items, ranging from Danish nutcrackers through gold

JEAN MARTIN is a frequent Nation *contributor.*

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lamé ironing-board covers and on up to foreign sports cars, in single sales at the reduced price for direct delivery in bulk.

But the biggest boost to public awareness of Chicago's new continental position came with the visit of the Queen. By a stroke of cosmic good luck this took place on a day of exquisite, wine-like weather, the like of which Chicago had not seen for ten years and probably won't see again for another ten. It was the kind of day on which you could see the sand dunes of Indiana with the naked eye from the downtown offices. From the moment when Philip, in an impulse of curiosity, stood up in the landing boat for a look at the city (he turned and pronounced it "beautiful" to Elizabeth who remained demurely seated under a canopy, probably steeling herself for the encounter with this supposed Chicago *Tribune* stronghold of anti-British feeling) — from that first moment to the last, when Mayor Daley (limp from the exertion of pronouncing words correctly all day) told the serenely smiling, unruffled Queen to "come again and bring the children," the whole thing was a sudden, deep, unexpected love affair between the crowds and the Queen.

HAVING thus had its first taste of its new cosmopolitan role as a World Port, Chicago plunged with reckless aplomb into the Pan-American Olympic games which, as it turned out, was a fiasco of continental proportions. The weather this time was a record-breaking heat wave and the events, scattered all over town in tacky high school and college gyms (the sculling events took place on the Cal-Sag Canal which, as the name suggests, is scarcely a green-banked Thames), were sparsely attended. The South Americans, battered by language difficulties and the unspeakable heat, found themselves housed as far afield and in such strange places as Naperville and Wheaton. The low point of a grim week was surely the day on which two horses (unfortunately both of them South American) completed the jumping course at Hinsdale's Oak Brook and then dropped dead from heat and exhaustion.

But the most trenchant reminder of the way in which the Seaway may change the city turned up in the course of a run-of-the-mill hassle on public housing. In a bitter struggle over the location of future projects it was pointed out that Chicago's public housing is now occupied by 85 per cent Negroes, 12 per cent whites and 3 per cent Puerto Ricans. It was that last 3 per cent, thrown in as an afterthought, that suddenly became of commanding interest, for it was the first statistical appearance of the deepest way in which the Seaway may yet affect Chicago's provincial outline.

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

PRAISE the Phoenix Theatre for producing Eugene O'Neill's *The Great God Brown* anew (Coronet). George Jean Nathan thought it O'Neill's best play, an opinion I do not share, but one step toward the making of a true theatre in our country is the production of old plays of merit.

It is not sufficient, though, that such plays be seen merely as new "shows"; they should be comprehended as part of a development in their author's work and as part of our own history. It is no longer of first importance that O'Neill used masks in this play, a device considered highly "experimental" in 1926 when the play was originally presented. What is important is the play's theme and the anguish O'Neill imbued it with. The theme is the practical man's envy of the artist and the artist's jealousy of the dominant practical man — a peculiarly American theme in the period of the play's conception.

O'Neill probed further than this bald statement might suggest. He saw the American businessman — for that is what Brown represents, though O'Neill made him an architect — becoming infected with the artist's yearnings, and unable finally to realize himself either as one thing or another. Brown suffers some of the inner dissatisfactions which plague and impel the artist without possessing the artist's sensibility or skill. More strikingly, O'Neill portrays his artist, Dion Anthony, as a trammeled human being, really a half-artist with a gnawing sense of inadequacy in his philosophy, his personality and his ad-

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justment to life. That is a crucial American tragedy: the incompleteness of American civilization as it focuses in the individual.

This sounds old-fashioned. Today, only a brief "moment" since the dilemma appeared poignant in the growing American consciousness, terms and circumstances have altered their outer form. The businessman of today is emotionally more complacent: if he appreciates the artist's function, collects paintings, attends concerts and reads certain books or book reviews, he expresses his disquiet otherwise than O'Neill's Brown. Similarly the artist today seems to have taken his "proper" place in our society, so that with a little maneuvering, rationalization, psychoanalysis and publicity he can feel pretty much in the same boat as the Browns. The result is that they are both prepared to moan in monotonous chorus about taxes and the threat of atomic extinction.

The core of the matter, however, is not changed as much as we pretend; if we believe otherwise that is chiefly because we rarely think of any "core" at all, except to indulge ourselves in a specious vocabulary of high-brow platitudes. O'Neill was no intellectual; if his play suffers in form and thought as well as in clarity, its impulse and source are nevertheless real and deep.

IN O'Neill's work as a whole the theme of *The Great God Brown* recurs again and again in the most diverse guises; and if we refer even cursorily to O'Neill's life we become aware that the conflicts which made the theme urgent were rooted in his relationship to his father, his mother, his brother. A blood tie binds *Beyond the Horizon, Desire Under the Elms, Marco Millions, Long Day's Journey Into Night, A Touch of the Poet* into a single underlying meaning: the individual American has not reached fulfillment; he is not full grown, neither as a doer nor as a feeling person has he yet made peace with himself or with the world, and all the blather about the "American way of life" will not heal the sore.

Note too that O'Neill's artist, for all his mockery of Brown, is not presented as a "genius." It is always clear that O'Neill never thought of himself as a master in any way. He identified himself with derelicts and failures. He has no heroes; all his central figures yammer and yearn, curse and are as much lost as Yank the laborer in *The Hairy Ape*. Immature on the level of ultimate power, O'Neill is the dramatic poet of our own immaturity — which in his work is not merely an artistic or an intellectual flaw, but a lacerating wound.

You may be embarrassed by some of the awkwardness and feeble verbiage of *The Great God Brown*; particularly in the last act; and you can if you wish disparage O'Neill, in academic loftiness, by comparing his plays with the best work of the European playwrights of the past forty years. The fact remains that he is not only our most important dramatist, but one whose total product is, even in some of its faults, more truly relevant to the American people — whose "story" after all concerns the whole of modern society — than any other dramatist of this period anywhere.

The Phoenix Theatre production under Stuart Vaughan's direction is much more obviously stylized than the original production directed by Robert Edmond Jones. The new production is perhaps more lucid than the early one, or let us say less "mystic." It is intelligently executed throughout. I also believe it likely that the comparatively young actors in the present production — Fritz Weaver, Robert Lansing and the others — "understand" the play and their parts better than did those of the original cast. Yet I cannot suppress the feeling that the emotional resources of our present generation of actors are not as rich as those of former years. The distinction is not one of talent: it has much to do with the times. Today we are perhaps more troubled and possess less actual experience. Our lesions nowadays seem to be chronic, and so to speak automatic, whereas the older actors were more truly engaged in the world and in the living theatre. They had *earned* their neuroses.

ART

Fairfield Porter

THE REUBEN GALLERY is a new gallery at 61 Fourth Avenue, New York. It plans to show *avant-garde* art that you can see nowhere else. The first exhibition is not of paintings but is an "event" consisting of eighteen "happenings," by Allan Kaprow. Kaprow has had thirteen one-man exhibitions, and he teaches art history at Rutgers University. He wishes to stretch the limits of art: he wants to make something outside the old classifications, to which one responds with several senses. Like a composer of opera, he wants to combine all the arts in one form. He is ambitious; and as a teacher conscious of history he is impatient with the brush: he resembles the critics who say, "you can't do such and such any more, it has already been done."

To see the "Eighteen Happenings" it was necessary to reserve seats in advance. During the performance different things go on in each of three different rooms, which are separated by semi-transparent plastic partitions. After two sets of events, you move, during an intermission, to another room, according to instructions given you at the door. After two more events you move to the remaining room, and so each member of the audience sees one-third of all that goes on; but you can hear and partly see what is happening in the other rooms. Actors come in, read or speak or play a musical instrument, or paint, or just move; and accompanying this are tape-recorded sounds and the activity and noise of wound-up mechanical toys. Sometimes the words spoken are drowned out by other sounds. In one room is a collage of artificial fruits, partly painted over. There are vari-colored lights.

The movements are military, disciplined and solemn: the words spoken have a similar solemnity, the fragments of ideas are romanticized, there is something about time from T. S. Eliot, phrases like "art: dear to you all" and "the mocker mocked." A game is stiffly played according to plan by two players with cubical blocks.

THE details, like the details of collage, are ready-made: reminiscences of sets by Rauschenberg for dances by Cunningham, of Cage's music (this in the quality of timing), of modern poetry, of Dada and German Expressionism. The action is monolithic, the materials of the setting flimsy, and the voices have an unrelieved seriousness. Kaprow's method is almost the opposite of most artists, literary or visual, who make something out of clichés or ordinary things or rubbish: he uses art, and he makes clichés. Kaprow debases what he quotes and what he refers to. If he wants to prove that certain things can't be done again because they have already been done, he couldn't be more convincing. The "Eighteen Happenings" devalue all art by a meaningless and deliberate surgery. And the final totality is without character, it never takes off from the sidewalk.

Avant-garde art has the merit of surprise. Kaprow's *avant-garde* "event" constantly disappoints one's expectation of surprise. Like so many science fiction movies about the future, his subject matter is the undigested immediate past.

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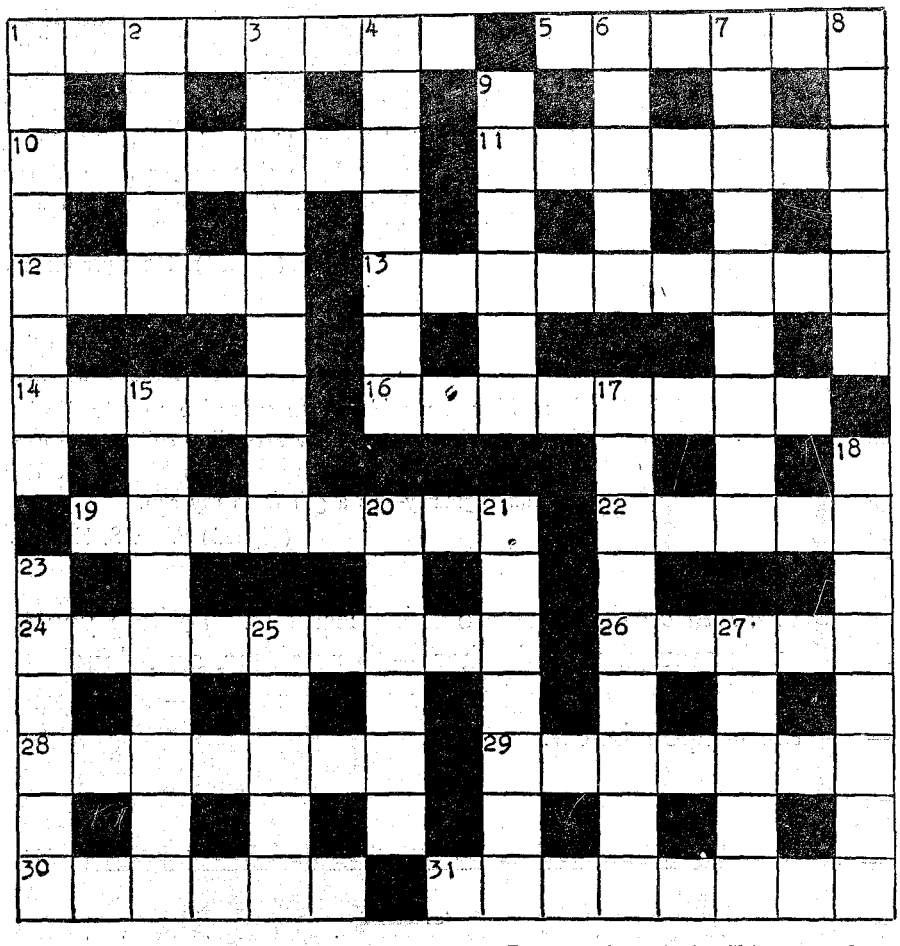
Crossword Puzzle No. 839

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 and 10 Approaching the stupid, pushed aside by the guards? (8, 7)
5 Set upon, like a sheet. (6)
10 See 1 across
11 Aries sees poorly, for an Egyptian! (7)
12 If a hundred-headed, might be descended from 11, in one sense. (5)
13 The balance of the horse, perhaps. (9)
14 See 24 across
16 Sounds like largess in the economy size, in the Amazon for example. (8)
19 Something thrown in according to method? (2, 3, 3)
22 The town of Duchess Engels. (5)
24, 14 across, and 17 down A brave way of following the enemy's movements! (7, 2, 3, 2, 3, 6)
26 Franklin thought his early get-up might be profitable, but sometimes tripped over. (5)
28 Sort of ritual following tea—in name only. (7)
29 Reduced to common standard. (7)
30 In support of cakewalks? (6)
31 Some businessmen might have lots of them. (4, 4)

DOWN:

1 Pogo sticks or stilts? (8)
2 Where the heavenly company gathered? (5)
3 Does the poor indian join the ministry? (9)
4 The savings of China, perhaps. (4, 3)
6 Mus.? Add! (3, 2)
7 Elements of reference might be basic to back-sass. (9)
8 Somewhat like a 50-mule team to go along with the lads! (6)
9 This could be quite a shock. (6)
15 Merry's the word for the poetaster. (9)
17 See 24 across
18 One might find barges in here. (8)
20 They might be laid by our betters. (6)
21 Do these people have pull with the wrong seat of power? (7)
23 A shrew's on board, and slips on the ice. (6)
25 A small bit of land is rented this way. (5)
27 For a base answer, ask it incorrectly. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 838

ACROSS: 1 Double-barreled; 10 Magneto; 11 Hammer; 12 Birdcage; 14 Doodled; 15, 9, 21 down and 23 I Shot an Arrow Into the Air; 17 Eases; 19 Earring; 21 Ice cream; 25 Tripoli; 26 Untwist; 27 What in the world. DOWN: 1 Death rate; 2 Unarmed; 3 Larcenous; 4 and 6 Bowlegged; 5 Remainders; 7 Eyewash; 8 and 24 Nonesuch; 13 Alienation; 15 Irish stew; 16 Tolerated; 18 Swedish; 20 Glacier; 22 Roost.

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